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3) Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei)

Prime Minister's schedule, October 5

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)

October 6, 2009

09:29 Arrived at the Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei).

11:41 Made a condolence call at the private residence of the late former finance minister Shoichi Nakagawa.

12:43 Met Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirano at the Kantei.

14:35 Met Hirano at the Kantei, followed by British minister for private firms and deregulation Mandelson.

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16:00 Met State Minister for National Strategy Bureau Kan.

18:37 Dined with his wife, Miyuki, and professional baseball player Lee of the Yomiuri Giants at a Korean restaurant in Daiba.

21:35 Returned to his private residence.

4) SDP policy chief arrives in Afghanistan

SANKEI (Page 5) (Full)

October 6, 2009

Kyodo

KABUL-Tomoko Abe, chair of the Social Democratic Party's policy board, arrived yesterday in the Afghan capital city of Kabul with Ryoichi Hattori, an SDP lawmaker in the House of Representatives, to study specific measures for Japan to assist with Afghanistan's reconstruction instead of continuing the Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling activities in the Indian Ocean. They are scheduled to stay in Afghanistan until Oct. 9.

5) Prime Minister Hatoyama meets with British First Secretary of State Mandelson

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Full)

October 6, 2009

Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama yesterday held talks with British First Secretary of State Peter Mandelson at the Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei). In the meeting, Mandelson asked Hatoyama to continue the Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling mission in the Indian Ocean. Hatoyama responded by saying, "We would like to consider the issue from the viewpoint of what sort of cooperation would be appreciated by the Afghan people and the countries engaged in the war on terror."

6) Foreign Minister Okada, French envoy to North Korea agree to closely cooperate in resolving North Korean nuclear issue

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Full)

October 6, 2009

Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada met yesterday with French special envoy to North Korea Jack Lang at the Foreign Ministry. During the meeting, they agreed that their countries will closely cooperate to resolve the North Korean nuclear and missile issues. In response to Okada's request for France's cooperation on the issue of abductions of Japanese nationals by North Korea, Lang said, "I understand the importance of the issue."

7) Inamori picked as Administrative Reform Council member: Mogi, Katayama also to be tapped

ASAHI (Top play) (Full)

October 6, 2009

The lineup of the Administrative Reform Council, which the Hatoyama

cabinet has established for the purpose of identifying wasteful spending of tax revenues, has been decided. State Minister for Administrative Reform Council Yoshiro Sengoku on October 5 decided to appoint from private companies Kazuo Inamori (77), the honorary chairman of Kyocera Corp. and Yuzaburo Mogi (74), representative director of Kikkoman Corp., as key council members. From among those

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who have served as head of a local government, Sengoku plans to tap Yoshihiro Katayama (58), former Tottori governor.

Eleven persons - six politicians and six private citizens - are expected to serve as the key members of the council. Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama will serve as chairman and Sengoku as vice chairman. Deputy Prime Minister and State Minister for National Strategy Bureau Naoto Kan and Finance Minister Hirohisa Fujii will join from among politicians.

Inamori has a close relationship with Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) Secretary General Ichiro Ozawa. His presence is known as a sort of "guardian" of the DPJ. From among private citizens, former Japanese Trade Union Confederation (Rengo) Secretariat chief Tadayoshi Kusano (65), who is well-versed in labor issues, has also been picked. The appointment of Hideki Kato, representative of Japan Initiative, a private-sector think-tank, as the chief of the secretariat and a council member, has also been fixed.

The Administrative Reform Council is tasked with securing funding resources to finance new policies such as the child care allowance to be incorporated in the fiscal 2010 budget. The cabinet intends to have Inamori and Mogi use the knowledge in corporate management that they have acquired through many years of experience in order to make more efficient administration possible.

The Council will also put the desired nature of central and local governments, including decentralization, on the agenda. Sengoku selected candidates from among persons who have served as heads of local governments and decided to appoint Katayama, who has served as a prefectural governor.

The Council will hold its first meeting as early as late October and proceed with the initial work of identifying wasteful spending of tax revenues.

8) Secretaries general of ruling parties to hold meeting today

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
October 6, 2009

The secretaries general of the ruling Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) and its coalition partners -- the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the People's New Party (PNP) -- will hold their first meeting since the inauguration of the coalition government. They are expected to discuss such issues as how to coordinate views among the three parties regarding policy-making within the coalition administration.

9) Extra Diet session to convene on Oct. 26

ASAHI (Page 1) (Full)
October 6, 2009

Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama yesterday decided to convene an extraordinary Diet session as early as Oct. 26 immediately after Upper House by-elections in Kanagawa and Shizuoka prefectures. Hatoyama prioritizes compiling the budget for fiscal 2010 by the end of this year in order to translate his party's manifesto (a set of campaign pledges) into action, so he intends to schedule the extra session for about a month.

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By convening the extra session soon after the Upper House by-elections, Hatoyama appears to have decided to prevent debate at

the session with the opposition Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) on the issue of his political fund management organization's false reports from having a negative impact on the elections. Moreover, if this issue is pursued in the Diet over a long period of time, it could be a minus to his administration. He therefore appears to be trying to avoid such a situation by setting a short Diet session. He intends to narrow down the number of bills to be submitted to the Diet.

10) LDP to earnestly pursue Hatoyama donation scandal

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Excerpts)
October 6, 2009

The Tokyo District Public Prosecutors Office has launched an investigation into political funds reports produced by Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama's political-fund management organization. Meanwhile, the major opposition Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) intends to grill the Prime Minister over the donation scandal by positioning veteran lawmakers at key posts. Whether the LDP can turn the tables remains to be seen.

In an interview yesterday with the Nikkei and other media outlets, Policy Research Council Chairman Shigeru Ishiba harshly criticized the Prime Minister's response, saying, "If he thinks that it is acceptable because it was his own money, he is wrong. This is a serious violation of the law." Secretary General Tadamori Oshima, too, emphatically said to the press corps: "If the Prime Minister cannot offer an adequate explanation to the public in a responsible manner, we will have to question him in detail at the Diet."

The LDP is making arrangements to appoint former Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobutaka Machimura as the principal director of the House of Representatives Budget Committee where the donation scandal will be pursued. The LDP is also considering allowing a veteran lawmaker to concurrently serve as a member of the shadow cabinet (tentative name) and as the principal director of a standing Diet committee. The LDP's strategy is to pit its seasoned lawmakers against the Hatoyama cabinet which is composed mostly of first-time cabinet ministers.

11) LDP Policy Research Council chief calls for discussion on permanent law for continuation of refueling mission

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
October 6, 2009

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Policy Research Council Chairman Shigeru Ishiba gave an interview to the Nikkei and other media outlets yesterday. Touching on the Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling mission in the Indian Ocean, Ishiba said: "Informal discussions have been conducted with the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ). We want to discuss a general law." Ishiba thus revealed the view that (the LDP and DPJ) should look into a permanent law (allowing the government) to dispatch the Self-Defense Forces overseas whenever necessary for the continuation of the operation.

Ishiba also raised questions about providing civilian aid to Afghanistan, an option the Hatoyama cabinet is currently considering, saying, "Who is going to ensure safety? Will an

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organization which cannot ensure its own safety be able to conduct effective activities?"

12) Poll of DPJ Lower House lawmakers: 57 PERCENT approve of consumption tax hike, 62 PERCENT see need for additional stimulus package

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 3) (Abridged)
October 6, 2009

Kyodo News recently conducted a questionnaire survey of 308 Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) lawmakers elected in this summer's election for the House of Representatives. In the survey, 57.6 PERCENT of respondents answered "yes" when asked if the consumption

tax should be raised in the future for a drastic review of the nation's pension system. Prime Minister Hatoyama has decided not to raise the consumption tax for the next four years. However, the government's spending on social security has been increasing due to the nation's aging population with fewer children. Under such circumstances, the survey shows that many of the DPJ's lawmakers are in favor of raising the consumption tax in the future.

Asked about a possible slowdown of the nation's economy, 62.4 PERCENT of respondents answered that the government should take additional measures this fall. However, 64.3 PERCENT said the government should not issue any more deficit-covering bonds. The figure shows that the majority of the DPJ's lawmakers are trying to avoid increasing the government's debt. Meanwhile, 77.1 PERCENT said the government, after abolishing gasoline and other road-related taxes, should introduce a carbon tax or other similar tax in order to address global warming.

Hatoyama has pledged to reduce Japan's greenhouse gas emissions 25 PERCENT below 1990 levels by 2020. Asked about this goal, 90.5 PERCENT said it was appropriate.

Answers were obtained from 210 persons or 68.2 PERCENT of the DPJ's lawmakers elected in the House of Representatives election.

13) Japanese government found to have drafted plan to bail out two U.S. companies

MAINICHI (Page 1) (Abridged slightly)
October 6, 2009

The Mainichi Shimbun has learned through interviews with knowledgeable sources that the Japanese government had considered providing assistance from foreign currency reserves to two U.S. government-affiliated housing loan corporations in late August 2008, when they were facing a management crisis. Its plan was to purchase the two companies' corporate bonds worth several trillion yen, because there was concern that no one would bid on the open tenders for their corporate bonds. The world was on the brink of plunging into a financial crisis at the time. Even so, it is very unusual for any government to use public money to bail out foreign financial institutions. The case would seem to reveal the unique nature of Japan-U.S. relations.

The two financial institutions in question are Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae, both of which had been securitizing funds procured from the issue of corporate bonds and selling the securities to investors. The total amount of outstanding residential

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mortgage-backed securities issued by the two companies stood at roughly 6 trillion dollars, or approximately 540 trillion yen, accounting for 50 percent of the total amount of outstanding housing loans in the U.S. Many financial institutions in the world owned those securities. The failure of the two companies would certainly have had a serious impact on the global financial system.

The management crisis at both companies surfaced in July 2008. The U.S. government announced setting up an investment framework of up to 400 billion dollars, or 36 trillion yen, in mid-July. However, the market did not calm.

A small number of senior Finance Ministry officials, in close cooperation with the U.S. Treasury Department, mapped out a plan named "Operation Rescue," under which Japan was to purchase both companies' corporate bonds, releasing several trillion yen from the government's foreign currency reserves.

However, then Finance Minister Ibuki remained cautious about the plan. In addition, the government became dysfunctional as Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda announced his resignation. As a result, the plan was not realized. The U.S. government bailed out the two companies, by nationalizing them with an injection of public funds on Sept. 7. Lehman Brothers imploded on Sept. 15.

Former finance minister Ibuki told a Mainichi Shimbun reporter: "The

plan never advanced to the stage requiring clearance from the finance minister. However, my decision that the government should not purchase assets that could lead to losses in foreign currency reserves in the face of the impending U.S.-induced economic crisis was only natural."

14) Transport minister eyes growth strategies for four areas, including tourism

NIKKEI (Page 5) (Full)
October 6, 2009

In a speech in Tokyo yesterday, Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Minister Seiji Maehara said the ministry will draw up strategies for growth in four areas, including tourism. Specifically, he cited the need to (1) increase the number of foreign tourists; (2) revitalize the aviation industry by liberalizing aviation services; (3) raise the competitiveness of ports to the level of Singapore and Pusan; and (4) internationalize the transport and construction industries by exporting Shinkansen bullet trains and helping general contractors expand overseas.

15) DPJ fed up with demands by SDP, PNP deviating from pragmatic line over debt moratorium, nuclear-power generation policy

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Slightly abridged)
October 6, 2009

Various policy discrepancies are coming into the open in the coalition camp. The Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) is increasingly irritated at its two ruling partners, the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the People's New Party (PNP), which are trying to demonstrate their own policy imprint.

In a speech in Tokyo yesterday, PNP President Shizuka Kamei, state minister for financial affairs and postal reform, emphasized the

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need to prepare a legal framework in the upcoming extraordinary Diet session for implementing a moratorium on loan repayments for small companies. He said: "I am determined to eagerly push ahead with this plan. Even if financial institutions become financially strapped, we should help them with the infusion of taxpayers' money. There are cases in which they (small firms) find it difficult to repay loans during the term of redemption. Small firms are in a very difficult situation."

Kamei has long proposed introducing a debt-moratorium system. He is steadily paving the way for introducing the system, as seen from the fact that he met Regional Banks Association of Japan Chairman Tadashi Ogawa ahead of the speech yesterday and asked him to understand the need to introduce the moratorium system.

The SDP is also in high spirits. SDP President Mizuho Fukushima, state minister for consumer affairs, food safety, declining birthrate and gender equality, barked on Oct. 3 at Environment Minister Sakihito Ozawa of the DPJ for his remark indicating a willingness to make use of atomic power generation to reduce Japan's greenhouse gas emissions. Fukushima assailed: "His argument is apparently wrong. We must prevent a discussion on the idea of using nuclear power generation to reduce CO2."

The SDP and the PNP have also made demands on the government's policymaking framework. The government has now set up two policymaking panels - the ministerial council on basic policies at the party-head level set up by the three ruling parties with the DPJ's concession, and the council on government agencies' policies held by senior vice ministers to listen to views of ruling party lawmakers. But the two parties have insisted that only two panels are insufficient. In the first meeting of the three ruling parties' secretaries general and Diet affairs committee chairmen today, the two parties intend to urge DPJ Secretary General Ichiro Ozawa to establish more forums for talks.

The DPJ is somewhat fed up with the two ruling partners' demanding posture. Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama takes a cautious view about

the loan moratorium system, saying: "We have not agreed to the moratorium proposed." One DPJ member claimed: "Since we are no longer opposition parties, we cannot take a policy contradictory to the common knowledge among the people that 'you must return anything you borrowed.'" Another member said: "We will make an enemy of the banking world." Also on the SDP's reaction to the atomic energy policy, a senior DPJ member grumbled: "Actually, it is impossible for the ruling party to oppose the use of atomic power generation."

The DPJ is aiming to establish a system under which only the government has authority to determine policies. Many party members also have strongly reacted to the demand by the SDP and the PNP over the policymaking framework. A DPJ member grumbled: "It might be necessary to secure a majority in the Upper House, but I wonder how long we are going to get along with the minority political parties.

16) Parliamentary defense secretary suggests continuation of refueling mission by amending law

SANKEI (Page 3) (Abridged slightly)
October 6, 2009

Parliamentary Defense Secretary Akihisa Nagashima of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) delivered a speech in Tokyo's Tachikawa City

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last night. Referring to the fact that Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada and others have indicated that (the DPJ administration) will not "simply extend" the Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling mission in the Indian Ocean, which is to expire next January, Nagashima said: "We want to (consider) options not tantamount to a simple extension, such as requiring Diet approval. If the country is allowed to continue the refueling mission by altering the framework of the law, the mission should be continued."

Nagashima thus presented the view that (the government) should decide in the extraordinary Diet session in the fall to continue the refueling mission by adding prior Diet approval for (SDF) dispatch to the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law. Nagashima also stressed that Japan hopes to play an active role in providing civilian aid to Afghanistan.

17-1) Defense Ministry discloses information on ASDF airlift activities in Iraq

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Top play) (Abridged)
October 6, 2009

Based on the Information Disclosure Law, the Ministry of Defense provided information on the weekly airlift activities of the Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) in Iraq to the requesters of this information. This airlift mission, which started in July 2006 after the Ground Self-Defense Force withdrew from Iraq, coincided with the period U.S. soldiers were transported to Baghdad, an activity the Nagoya High Court ruled to be unconstitutional last year. Under the previous administration, entries during this period were blacked out in the documents made public, but this time, all the information was disclosed. The requesters viewed this as an "effect of the change in administration."

The disclosed information on weekly airlift activities is for a period of 124 weeks from July 2006 to December 2008, when the airlift mission ended. Activities were recorded on 467 days, of which 218 days or 47 percent were devoted to air transport to Baghdad.

A total of 26,384 persons were transported, of which 17,650 or 67 percent were U.S. soldiers. Adding to this the soldiers of other countries, the proportion of military personnel transported came to 71 percent. On the other hand, only 2,564 UN officials were transported, which made up only 10 percent.

The previous administration had explained that the ASDF was on a humanitarian and reconstruction aid mission. However, it has been confirmed that the number of soldiers, who were responsible for the maintenance of security requiring the use of force, was

overwhelmingly larger than the number of UN officials in charge of reconstruction aid. This constitutes logistical support for the U.S. forces.

17-2) Defense Minister Kitazawa comments on disclosure of data on ASDF airlift mission in Iraq

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 1) (Full)
October 6, 2009

Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa's comments: It is inappropriate for the political authorities to impede the people's right to

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information. We are aware that this information contains certain military secrets, but if the political authorities order the bureaucrats to provide information to the people without fail, this can be done. Concealment of information is not in the interest of Japan or the ministries. Revealing the truth to the people is much more beneficial for Japan's politics.

17-3) New administration's reassessment of ASDF airlift mission in Iraq becomes essential after information disclosure

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 1) (Full)
October 6, 2009

Shigeru Handa, editorial staff member

With the change of government to an administration led by the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), information on the weekly airlift activities of the Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) in Iraq has been disclosed. The next challenge will be to reassess the deployment of the SDF to Iraq, which the DPJ had opposed as an opposition party. It will be interesting to see if the DPJ is able to demonstrate its clear difference from the previous administration's "subservience to the U.S."

In March 2003, then Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi was quick to announce his support for the war in Iraq led by the U.S. and the UK. The U.S. then demanded "boots on the ground (the deployment of the Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF)), so the Japanese government decided to send SDF troops.

After the withdrawal of the GSDF in July 2006, the ASDF expanded its airlift operations to Baghdad and other areas, and there were suspicions that these operations were serving the U.S. forces.

The DPJ's Kazuhiro Haraguchi (current minister of internal affairs and communications) once questioned the government at the House of Representatives special committee on Iraq in May 2007: "(This document) is all blacked out. Will civilian control be possible with this?"

The Social Democratic Party's Kiyomi Tsujimoto (current senior vice minister of land, infrastructure, transport, and tourism) also voiced her displeasure with the government's concealment of information at the Lower House Security Committee in November 2006: "If you are saying this is a humanitarian and reconstruction aid mission, show us a document that is not blacked out."

With the above politicians now in power, data on the airlift mission has been disclosed. On the other hand, the new administration has not clarified its position on the justification for the Iraq war, about which even the U.S. and the UK are now in doubt, and on the merit of the SDF deployment.

When the Nagoya High Court ruled in April 2008 that the airlift mission in Iraq was unconstitutional, the top SDF officer in charge of the mission argued that, "This is an outrageous verdict. There are also non-combat zones in Baghdad, and not all U.S. soldiers who alighted from our planes went straight to combat duties."

The disclosed weekly information on airlift activities alone will not be sufficient to judge if this argument was valid or not. Fortunately, SDF documents that can be used for the assessment are

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now in the hands of the new administration. An examination of security policy is indispensable for building an "equal Japan-U.S. relationship," which is Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama's goal.

ROOS